COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND BUILDING
STAFF REPORT

PLANNING COMMISSION

Promoting the Wise Use of Land
Helping to Build Great Communities

MEETING DATE	CONTACT/PHONE	APPLICANT	FILE NO.
November 10, 2016	Airlin M. Singewald, Senior Planner (805) 781-5198	Chicago Grade Landfill and Recycling, LLC	DRC2003-00026

SUBJECT

Request by Chicago Grade Landfill and Recycling, LLC for a modification of an existing Conditional Use Permit in order to gain additional, short-term capacity in a portion of the Chicago Grade Landfill. This additional capacity will be created with the following proposed actions: (1) increase the currently approved 1,360 foot elevation limit to a 1,386 foot elevation over approximately four acres within module 3 and a portion of module 4 of the land fill and (2) allow site preparation (i.e., placement of liner) within areas outside the approved 1970 landfill boundary but not into the modules 6 or 7 that were established in 2007 with the County's approval of a Conditional Use Permit (DRC2003-00026). These actions would expand the solid waste footprint by approximately 0.67 acres and would create approximately 166,500 cubic yards of additional waste storage space or eight additional months of storage operations at the landfill. After completion of landfill operations associated with the proposed vertical expansion to elevation 1,386, the four acre area within module 3 and a portion of module 4 will be covered with low permeability clay soils and revegetated. The proposed project is within the Agriculture land use category and is located at 2290 Homestead Road in the Atascadero-Templeton Planning Area approximately two miles west of the City of Atascadero.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Staff recommends the Planning Commission take the following actions in this order:

1. Approve the Addendum to the previously certified EIR including any attachments as complete and adequate in accordance with the applicable provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act, Public Resources Code Section 21000 et.seq.
2. Approve the amended Conditional Use Permit (DRC2003-00026) based on the Findings in Exhibit A and Conditions of Approval in Exhibit B.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION

The Environmental Coordinator is recommending the proposed project be found consistent with the previously certified Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) per State CEQA Guidelines (Section 15164(a) and Section 15162). An Addendum EIR was prepared and circulated for this item. The Addendum EIR identified all potentially significant impacts and mitigation measures related to the proposed project for the following topic areas: aesthetics; agricultural resources; air quality/greenhouse gas emissions; biological resources; cultural resources; geology and soils; hazards and hazardous materials; water, noise, public services/utilities and transportation/circulation. Mitigation measures are proposed to address potentially significant impacts in the areas of aesthetics, noise and public services/utilities and are included as conditions of approval (see Exhibit B). No significant, unavoidable impacts were identified.

LAND USE CATEGORY	COMBINING DESIGNATION	ASSESSOR PARCEL NUMBER	SUPERVISOR DISTRICT(S)
Agriculture	None	034-212-005 and 034-212-006	5

PLANNING AREA STANDARDS: None applicable.

EXISTING USES: Existing landfill including a solid waste disposal area, hazardous waste transfer facility, recycled materials area, office/maintenance building, scale house, entry area and on-site roadways (see subsection titled "Current Landfill Operations").	
SURROUNDING LAND USE CATEGORIES AND USES: North: Agriculture/open space, South El Pomar Road South: Rural Residential and Agriculture/ rural residences, agriculture, Highway 41, open space East: Agriculture/ rural residences, agriculture, open space West: Rural Residential/ rural residences, Homestead Road, open space	
OTHER AGENCY / ADVISORY GROUP INVOLVEMENT: The Proposed Project was referred to: County Department of Public Works, County Air Pollution Control District, County Integrated Waste Management Agency and CalRecycle.	
TOPOGRAPHY: Gently sloping to very steep slopes (0% to 40% or greater). Site elevations range between 1,000 and 1,500 feet above mean sea level.	VEGETATION: Native trees and shrubs including coast live oak, toyon, chemise and sage as well as non-native annual grassland and forbs
PROPOSED SERVICES: Water: On-site wells Sewage Disposal: On-site septic Fire Protection: Cal Fire	ACCEPTANCE DATE: June 16, 2016

SUMMARY

Ongoing operations of the existing Chicago Grade Landfill within landfill modules 3 and 4 are currently reaching capacity. Once capacity is reached within these modules, the entire 38.44 acre waste disposal area covered by the original 1970 California Solid Waste Facilities Permit will have also reached capacity. Although the 2007 Conditional Use Permit (DRC2003-00026) issued by the County allows expansion into modules 6 and 7, the landfill operators are not ready to proceed with expansion of landfill operations into these modules due to the unexpected increase in solid waste volume received at the landfill. The Chicago Grade Landfill has experienced a significant increase in solid waste volume due to several factors including the increase of rates at other landfills serving the Central Coast and the overall economic recovery. This circumstance has generated the need for the currently proposed vertical expansion.

The currently proposed vertical expansion is intended to gain additional, short-term capacity in module 3 and a portion of module 4 of the Chicago Grade Landfill. This additional capacity will be created with the following proposed actions: (1) increase the currently approved 1,360 foot elevation limit to a 1,386 foot elevation over approximately four acres within module 3 and a portion of module 4 and (2) allow site preparation (i.e. placement of liner) within areas outside the approved 1970 landfill boundary but not into the modules 6 or 7 that were established in 2007. These actions will be implemented through a modification of the approved Conditional Use Permit (DRC2003–00026) including modified conditions of approval.

The currently proposed vertical expansion would expand the solid waste footprint by approximately 0.67 acres and would create approximately 166,500 cubic yards of additional waste storage space or eight additional months of storage operations at the landfill. After completion of landfill operations associated with the proposed vertical

expansion to elevation 1386, the four acre area within module 3 and a portion of module 4 will be covered with low permeability clay soils and revegetated. Once these modules reach capacity within the proposed vertical expansion to the 1386 foot elevation, solid waste operations will then shift to module 6. This will activate the conditions of approval associated with the 2007 County approval (DRC2003-00026) for landfill expansion into modules 6 and 7. With approval of the currently proposed vertical expansion, this transfer of waste operations from the 38.44 acre disposal area to modules 6 and 7 is anticipated to occur in 2017 or 2018.

This Staff Report is organized as follows:

- The **Background Information** section provides a description of the current operations of the Chicago Grade Landfill as well as the 2007 County approval of the landfill expansion (DRC2003-00026).
- The **Project Description** section provides an overview of the currently-proposed vertical expansion.
- The **Environmental Determination** section provides an overview of the Addendum EIR prepared for the proposed project as well as any potentially significant environmental impacts and mitigation measures identified in the Addendum EIR.
- The **Key Environmental Issues** section provides a summary of any significant environmental issues.
- The **Ordinance Compliance/Land Use Consistency** identifies applicable County ordinances and discusses how the proposed project is consistent with the ordinance requirements listed.
- The **Community Advisory Group Comments** section provides the results of the review of the proposed project by the Templeton Area Advisory Group.
- The **Agency Review** section summarizes the local and State agencies that have provided comments on the project.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Current Landfill Operations

The Chicago Grade Landfill began operations in 1970. Since that time, the facility has served self-hauled public and commercial customers and transfer trailers. The facility's service area has historically extended from northern Santa Barbara County to southern Monterey County, including all of San Luis Obispo County. Between 1970 and 2015, approximately 4,270.959 cubic yards of solid waste have been placed in the landfill. This total includes both solid waste and daily cover. The annual average tonnage of waste delivered to the landfill has varied over time. From 1976 to 1986, the annual tonnage delivered generally increased from about 10,000 tons to about 38,000 tons per year in 1986. From 1986 to 1994, annual tonnage volumes decreased from 38,000 tons in 1986 to a low of 10,000 tons in 1994. Since 1994, annual tonnage has steadily increased. In 2003, the landfill handled 83,393 tons of waste. By 2010, the landfill handled 59,199 tons of solid waste with additional tonnage being recycled. Since 2010, the landfill has handled an increase of solid waste volumes to 93,483 tons of solid waste in 2015 (not including recycled tonnage). This increase in solid waste volume is due to several

factors, including the increase of rates at other landfills serving the Central Coast and the overall economic recovery. See Table 1 (page 21) of the Addendum EIR for a graph indicating the annual waste tonnage received at the landfill since 1976.

The number of vehicles entering and leaving the site generally mirrors the historic trends in solid waste disposal. From 1976 to 1986, the number of annual vehicle trips increased from approximately 38,000 vehicle trips to a high of about 86,000 in 1986. Vehicle trips declined to about 28,000 in 1994. By 2003, annual vehicle trip totals had increased to approximately 49,592 annual trips. By 2005, the annual vehicle trips totaled 55,179 trips and 39,582 annual trips in 2010. By 2015, annual vehicle trips totaled approximately 49,100 vehicle trips. Of these totals, commercial haulers accounted for 7,868 vehicle trips while public vehicle traffic accounted for 41,232 vehicle trips. The waste disposal area is currently divided into modules 1 through 5.

Solid Waste Facility Permits

The Chicago Grade Landfill is classified by the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (CCRWQCB) as a Class III landfill approved for discharge of non-hazardous solid waste. The landfill is operated by Chicago Grade Landfill, Inc. under a California Solid Waste Facilities Permit (SWFP). The current SWFP was issued by CalRecycle in 2012. The Chicago Grade Landfill has a total permitted acreage of 188 acres of which 76.4 acres can be used for disposal activities. Solid waste is currently placed within a 38.44 acre waste disposal area that is within the 76.4 acre permitted area. The waste disposal area is currently divided into modules 1 through 5.

In addition to the existing SWFP permit, the Chicago Grade Landfill holds three permits from the San Luis Obispo County Air Pollution Control District (SLOAPCD). These permits include: Permit to Operate No. 547-1 for the landfill gas flare; Permit to Operate No. 648-2 for the tire shredder and Permit to Operate No. 548-2 for an on-site bifuel generator. The CCRWQCB also has discretionary review authority for landfill operations through its Waste Discharge Requirements.

Facilities and Structures

Ancillary facilities at the Chicago Grade Landfill include administrative offices, yard waste drop off area, maintenance facilities, environmental monitoring and control facilities, a wood waste grinder and a scale-house structure. Wastewater is disposed through an on-site septic system. Non-potable water is provided by on-site wells. The water is piped to four interconnected 10,000-gallon storage tanks.

Waste Disposal Process

Customers enter the landfill via Homestead Road and stop at the landfill scale-house. At the scale-house, loads are weighed and inspected for potential hazardous content and geographic location of origin. Random load checks and segregation of recyclables occur at the disposal areas. Waste compaction activities generally begin an hour after the gate opens and continue throughout the day. Soil or an alternative daily cover is transported to the disposal area on an intermittent basis. Metal, wood, tires and household hazardous waste pulled from the waste stream are temporarily stockpiled near the disposal area and are hauled to the materials storage areas. On-site roads are watered with non-potable water and/or leachate as required for dust control. Concurrent

with these activities, workers may be grading new modules or placing liners on modules already excavated.

As of January 2016, the landfill capacity (including the expansion area that was approved in 2007) is approximately 3,005,888 tons or 4,268,361 cubic yards of solid waste. The landfill currently accepts up to 500 tons of solid waste per day. If this rate continues, approximately 170,000 tons of solid waste would be added to the landfill each year. The facility currently accepts commercial and self-hauled household waste, yard (green) waste, and construction demolition waste, as well as solid waste in compactor trucks, roll-off boxes, and transfer trailers. Waste tires are recycled both on-site and off-site while segregated metals are generally hauled off-site. Wood/green waste is generally shredded or ground on-site and then shipped off-site. Tire chips may be used on-site for cover or may be hauled off-site. Municipal sewage sludge is accepted on a case-by-case basis. Recycle bins are used by the public on a voluntary basis.

The landfill is not permitted to accept hazardous waste, however, the County Integrated Waste Management Authority (IWMA) accepts household hazardous waste such as paint, oil, cleaning products, etc. at its Permanent Household Hazardous Waste Facility (PHHWF), which is located within the landfill property boundary

Solid waste is currently being placed in modules 3 and 4. There is a borrow pit in the modules 3 and 4 from which soil is excavated to provide daily cover for the disposal waste. Under the applicant's current operating plans, a portion of the borrow materials needed for daily cover for permitted modules 3 and 4 would be excavated from an area located outside the permitted disposal footprint. As a result of current landfill operations, modules 3 and 4 are reaching their capacity. Once capacity is reached within these modules, the entire 38.44 acre waste disposal area covered by the original 1970 permit will have also reached capacity. Although the 2007 Conditional Use Permit issued by the County allows expansion into modules 6 and 7, the landfill operators are not ready to proceed with expansion of landfill operations into these modules due to logistical and site preparation requirements.

Up to 240 vehicles per day enter the landfill facility each weekday, not including employees and maintenance vehicles. This equates to a total of 480 daily vehicle trips into and out of the facility. On weekends, a daily maximum of 280 vehicles enter the facility, not including employees and maintenance vehicle trips. This equates to 560 total vehicle trips in and out of the facility. The vehicles include both commercial and private haul vehicles.

Chicago Grade Landfill is open to the public from 7:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday, and 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Sundays. At approximately 3:00 p.m., the last public and commercial customers are allowed to enter the facility and the entry gates are closed. Shortly thereafter, final waste compacting activities begin followed by placement of cover. Between 7:00 a.m. and 5:30 p.m., transfer trailers may deposit waste concurrent with daily cover and compacting efforts. The daily waste area is compacted and covered between 5:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.

Environmental Controls/Monitoring Systems

The Chicago Grade Landfill currently implements environmental controls and monitoring systems to prevent potential adverse environmental impacts on groundwater and

surface water quality, soils, air quality, and public health and safety from leachate, landfill methane gas, and soil erosion.

Leachate Control - Leachate control systems are regulated by CalRecycle. Leachate is contaminated liquid created when moisture percolates through a mass of solid waste. As moisture percolates through the waste, it picks up pollutants contained in the waste. Leachate that has percolated to the bottom of a landfill module is prevented from percolating through the soil below the module by a liner system. Liner systems typically consist of geotextiles and/or plastics that overlie a layer of compacted clay along the bottom and sides of a landfill. Liners are designed to prevent liquids (leachate) from leaving the landfill and impacting off-site groundwater resources.

Leachate that is contained above the liner is collected via a series of pipes that direct the leachate into an on-site storage tank. When the tank is full, the leachate is transferred to an on-site water truck and may be applied on-site for dust control. Leachate may only be applied for dust control on waste modules that are underlain by an approved liner system, which prevents percolation of leachate into soil or groundwater. The leachate is applied at locations and during times when it would be least likely to come into contact with members of the public. Leachate that cannot be utilized on site is delivered to the local wastewater treatment plant.

Storm Water and Sediment Control - A storm water collection and sedimentation control system is currently in place at the site. A series of corrugated metal pipes have been installed at the base of the existing landfill modules and within other portions of the site to collect storm water runoff. Runoff is directed to one of two existing sediment basins. Within these basins, particulates and other materials contained in the runoff settle out of the water and the remaining water is discharged to the existing intermittent stream channel that traverses a portion of the site. The landfill operator currently implements a range of measures to reduce erosion potential. These include placement of sludge on slopes, hydroseeding and slope revegetation, and placement of wood chips on soil.

Groundwater Monitoring - The Chicago Grade Landfill currently utilizes a series of wells to monitor groundwater quality and detect any contaminants that may have leaked into the groundwater system. There are three existing monitoring wells on site.

Landfill Gas System - Landfill gas (LFG) is typically created in a closed landfill module as a by-product of the decomposition of solid waste, especially organic wastes. LFG is typically highly flammable and explosive. The existing gas collection system consists of a series of vertical and horizontal collection pipes installed in the landfill. The pipes collect and direct LFG to an existing, approved and permitted landfill gas flaring unit where the gas is burned off. Gas monitoring wells are installed at the periphery of the permitted landfill footprint to detect potential migration of LFG to areas outside of the landfill modules.

2007 County Approval

The County of San Luis Obispo Board of Supervisors on February 27, 2007 approved an expansion of the landfill to include modules 6 and 7, which were previously outside the 1970 landfill boundary. The County approved a Conditional Use Permit (DRC2003-

00026) that expanded the permitted solid waste disposal area from 38.44 acres to 76.40 acres, an increase of 37.96 acres. The expansion area proposed at that time involved the addition of modules 6 and 7 with a specific elevation limitation of 1,360 feet applicable to all landfill operations in the existing landfill as well as future disposal modules. The approved State Solid Waste Facilities Permit issued by CalRecycle also includes a 1,360 elevation limitation. The approved Conditional Use Permit also identified a specific point, that being when a liner is placed beyond the original 1970 solid waste disposal area boundaries, where the conditions of approval within the 2007 Conditional Use Permit take effect.

Module 6 contains 24.8 acres while module 7 comprises 12.6 acres. The approved Conditional Use Permit creates capacity for disposal of an additional 3,098,775 tons of solid waste in these modules. At a projected two percent annual growth in demand for disposal capacity, the service life of the landfill would be extended to the year 2039. Module 6 would be constructed and filled first with module 7 to follow. Module 6 is anticipated to have a service life of approximately 15 years while module 7 would have an additional 14 years of service life under the currently-approved Conditional Use Permit. The new modules would include a liner system, leachate collection system, storm drainage collection and treatment system, a groundwater monitoring system and a methane gas collection system consistent with existing improvements installed in the previously-permitted modules 2, 3, and 4. As a result of the applicant's proposal to lower the permitted maximum height of landfill operations from an elevation of 1,400 feet to 1,360 feet, module 5 was eliminated from the long-range landfill operating plans. The approved Conditional Use Permit also: 1) allowed the placement of fill material along the northern boundary of module 6 and the northeastern boundary of modules 6 and 7 to provide a better visual screen of landfill operations from off-site vantage points, and 2) created an additional 100-foot wide buffer at the periphery of the expansion area into modules 6 and 7. In combination with the existing 500-foot buffer, a total buffer of 600 feet between modules 6 and 7 and the nearest existing residences would be created.

Approval of the Conditional Use Permit did not result in any changes to the prior landfill operations consistent with the State permit. No changes to the daily peak and annual volumes of accepted solid waste would result. The peak daily number of vehicle trips entering and exiting the landfill, those being 480 total vehicle trips on weekdays and 560 total vehicle trips on weekends, remained unchanged.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Project Characteristics

Ongoing operations of the existing Chicago Grade Landfill within landfill modules 3 and 4 are currently reaching capacity. Once capacity is reached within these modules, the entire 38.44 acre waste disposal area covered by the original 1970 California Solid Waste Facilities Permit will have also reached capacity. Although the 2007 Conditional Use Permit (DRC2003-00026) issued by the County allows expansion into modules 6 and 7, the landfill operators are not ready to proceed with expansion of landfill operations into these modules due to the unexpected increase in solid waste volume received at the landfill. The Chicago Grade Landfill has experienced a significant increase in solid waste volume due to several factors including the increase of rates at other landfills serving the Central Coast and the overall economic recovery. This

circumstance has generated the need for the currently proposed project vertical expansion.

The currently proposed vertical expansion is intended to gain additional, short-term capacity in module 3 and a portion of module 4 of the Chicago Grade Landfill. This additional capacity will be created with the following proposed actions: (1) increase the currently approved 1,360 foot elevation limit to a 1,386 foot elevation over approximately four acres within module 3 and a portion of module 4 and (2) allow site preparation (i.e., placement of liner) within areas outside the approved 1970 landfill boundary but not into the modules 6 or 7 that were established in 2007. These actions will be implemented through a modification of the approved Conditional Use Permit (DRC2003–00026) including modified conditions of approval.

The currently proposed vertical expansion will expand the solid waste footprint by approximately 0.67 acres and would create approximately 166,500 cubic yards of additional waste storage space or eight additional months of storage operations at the landfill. After completion of landfill operations associated with the proposed vertical expansion to elevation 1386, the four acre area within module 3 and a portion of module 4 will be covered with low permeability clay soils and revegetated.

Once these modules reach capacity within the proposed vertical expansion to the 1,386 foot elevation, solid waste operations will then shift to module 6. This will result in the implementation of the conditions of approval associated with the 2007 County approval (DRC2003-00026) for landfill expansion into modules 6 and 7. With approval of the currently proposed vertical expansion, this transfer of waste operations from the 38.44 acre disposal area to modules 6 and 7 is anticipated to occur in 2017 or 2018.

The currently proposed vertical expansion will not result in any increase in customer traffic to and from the landfill. A maximum of 240 vehicles on weekdays and 280 vehicles on weekends currently enter and depart the landfill each day. Similarly, the proposed project will not result in any change in the annual waste tonnage inflow or in the hours of landfill operations.

These proposed actions are necessary due to logistical and site preparation requirements. Approval of the proposed vertical expansion will delay access into module 6 for an additional year in order to complete final site preparation. This delay will allow adequate time to prepare module 6 for future (2017 or 2018) expansion of landfill operations.

Project Objectives

The basic objective of the currently proposed project is to provide additional landfill capacity in module 3 and a portion of module 4 of the landfill in order to allow adequate time to prepare modules 6 and 7 of the landfill for future expansion of landfill operations. In so doing, the currently proposed project will also achieve the following objectives: 1) increase the ability of the Chicago Grade Landfill to serve increasing demands for solid waste disposal in San Luis Obispo County; 2) allow landfill operations to continue within module 3 and a portion of module 4 thereby insuring the uninterrupted provision of solid waste disposal services and 3) increase short-term landfill capacity without changing the landfill operations, creating the need for additional on-site infrastructure facilities or generating any additional significant environmental impacts.

Project Timing

As previously noted, the currently proposed project will provide adequate time to prepare landfill module 6 for expansion of future landfill operations. Introduction of additional solid waste into module 3 and a portion of module 4 up to an elevation of 1,386 feet will proceed immediately upon approval of the proposed actions by the County of San Luis Obispo and the State of California (see below, Required Approvals and Applicable Regulations). Future expansion into module 6 is anticipated to occur in the year 2017 or 2018.

Required Approvals and Applicable Regulations

The currently proposed vertical expansion will be implemented through the modification of the previously approved (2007) Conditional Use Permit (DRC2003-00026) with conditions of approval (see Exhibit B). In order to approve the currently proposed vertical expansion, the County of San Luis Obispo will also be required to find that the project is consistent with the previously certified Final EIR.

Acting as the Lead Agency, several agencies are involved in the consideration of the currently proposed project. These agencies include the County Building and Planning Department, as well as the Environmental Health Division of the County Health Department, the County Public Works Department and the County Air Pollution Control District. Other involved agencies include: the Central California Regional Water Quality Control Board, the County of San Luis Obispo Integrated Waste Management Authority and CalRecycle.

Several State regulations from the California Code of Regulations are applicable to the currently proposed project. These regulations include, but may not be limited to:

Title 27, Subchapter 2, Article 3, Section 21190(b).

The site design shall consider one or more proposed uses of the site toward which the operator will direct its efforts or shall show development as open space, graded to harmonize with the setting and landscaped with native shrubs or low maintenance ground cover.

Title 27, Subchapter 2,Article 3, Section 21090(a)(3)(A) 1.

Closed landfills shall be provided with an uppermost cover layer consisting of erosion resistance via a vegetative layer consisting of not less than one foot of soil.

Title 27, Subchapter 2, Article 3 Section 20190(a)(4)(D).

The landfill will provide a final layer of erosion-resistant vegetation. In order to insure adequate maintenance for this vegetative cover, a plan shall be developed which addresses plant fertilization, irrigation, elimination of species that violate the rooting depth limit, replanting and irrigation system maintenance.

Consistency with Local and Regional Plans

The local and regional plans that include the project site or issues relating to the currently proposed project include the following: San Luis Obispo County General Plan and Land Use Ordinance; CalRecycle policies; Regional Water Quality Control Board policies; the Clean Air Plan; the Regional Transportation Plan and the North County Area Plan/South El Pomar-Estrella subarea.

The 2007 landfill expansion was determined to be consistent with the above noted local and regional plans. The proposed vertical expansion is also consistent with these plans.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION

An Addendum Environmental Impact Report (or "Addendum EIR") has been prepared to introduce technical changes and additions to the Final Environmental Impact Report ("Final EIR") for the Chicago Grade Landfill Expansion Development Permit (State Clearinghouse No. 20044071092). The Final EIR was certified by the County of San Luis Obispo Board of Supervisors on February 27, 2007. The Addendum EIR determined that the proposed vertical expansion would not result in any new or significantly increased environmental impacts that were not previously analyzed in the Final EIR.

The previously certified Final EIR (ED03-438) was based upon a Conditional Use Permit (DRC2003-00026) that allowed an expansion of the disposal area of the Chicago Grade Landfill from 38.44 acres to 76.40 acres, an increase of 37.96 acres. The approval created capacity for disposal of approximately 3,098,775 additional tons of waste. This expansion of the disposal area extended the service life of the landfill to the year 2039.

The currently proposed project increases the currently permitted maximum height of solid waste from elevation 1360 to elevation 1386 over an area of approximately four acres and allowing site preparation, that being placement of a soil liner within areas outside the original landfill boundary established in 1970 but not into the expanded solid waste disposal area that was approved in 2007. The currently proposed project would expand the solid waste footprint by approximately 0.67 acres and would create approximately 166,500 cubic yards of additional solid waste storage or approximately eight additional months of solid waste storage operations at this location. These actions will be implemented through a modification of the approved Conditional Use Permit (DRC2003–00026) including modified conditions of approval.

The Addendum EIR has been prepared in accordance with procedures adopted by the County of San Luis Obispo as Lead Agency relative to the California Environmental Quality Act as well as the CEQA Guidelines (Section 15120 et. seq.). According to the CEQA Guidelines (Section 15162(a)), an Addendum EIR can be prepared when "minor technical changes or additions to a previously certified EIR are necessary, if no substantial changes to the proposed project or to circumstances surrounding the project occur and if there are no new or more severe project impacts or significantly different mitigation measures or project alternatives from those in the previously certified Final EIR". Section 15164 of the CEQA Guidelines specifically states:

> (a) The lead agency or responsible agency shall prepare an addendum to a previously certified EIR if some changes or additions are necessary.

(b) An addendum to an adopted negative declaration may be prepared if only minor technical changes or additions are necessary.

(c) An addendum need not be circulated for public review but can be included in or attached to the Final EIR or adopted negative declaration.

(d) The decision making body shall consider the Addendum with the Final EIR or adopted Negative Declaration prior to making a decision on the project.

The Addendum EIR focuses its analysis on the impacts and mitigation measures associated with the currently proposed project. This Addendum EIR focused its analysis of project impacts and mitigations to those associated with the currently proposed vertical expansion thereby not involving or affecting the previously certified Final Environmental Impact Report for the Chicago Grade Landfill Expansion. The Addendum EIR, when approved, becomes part of and an attachment to the previously-certified Final EIR for the overall Chicago Grade Landfill Expansion.

The Addendum EIR begins with Section I. Introduction and Purpose which provides an introductory discussion of the purpose and scope of the document. Section II. Addendum EIR Summary summarizes the impacts associated with the currently proposed project and any required mitigation measures as they pertain specifically to the currently proposed project. Section III. Existing Setting and Landfill Operations provides background relative to the existing environmental conditions both within and in the area adjacent to the existing landfill as well as the current operations of the Chicago Grade Landfill. Section IV. Project Description identifies and describes in detail the proposed project which involves the increase in the permitted maximum height of solid waste and the placement of a soil liner within areas outside the original landfill boundary.

Section V. Environmental Analysis of the Addendum EIR analyzes the proposed project in relation to the following environmental issues in order to determine whether there are any additional significant impacts or revised mitigation measures associated with the currently proposed project that were not addressed within the Chicago Grade Landfill Expansion Development Permit Final Environmental Report. These environmental issues include aesthetics, agricultural resources, air quality/greenhouse gas emissions, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, hazards and hazardous materials, water, noise, public services/utilities, and transportation/circulation. The issues of land use and planning, population and housing and recreation were determined to be not relevant to both the previously-approved project as well as the current proposal. Section VI. References cites the various documents which were used during the preparation of the Addendum EIR.

The Addendum EIR is intended to provide the County of San Luis Obispo, as Lead Agency, with a document that will identify potentially significant environmental impacts, if any, and/or mitigation measures associated with the currently proposed project within the topic areas noted above which were not fully analyzed in the previously certified Final EIR. Data from the previously certified Final EIR will also serve as an environmental baseline for the consideration of the impacts and mitigations associated with the currently proposed project.

The impacts associated with the currently proposed project do not significantly differ from nor do they exceed the impacts identified in the previously certified (2007) Final EIR (ED03-438) which addressed the 37.96 acre expansion of the Chicago Grade Landfill.

The mitigation measures assigned to the current project proposal are similar to and do not exceed those mitigation measures associated with the County's approval of CUP 2003-00026. These mitigation measures have been revised in order to more accurately apply to the current project proposal.

All residual impacts associated with the current project proposal are identified as either Class II impacts (potentially significant impacts which have been reduced to a level of insignificance or avoided entirely with the implementation of proposed mitigation measures) or Class III impacts (impacts which are found to be insignificant).

KEY ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

As noted above, an Addendum Environmental Impact Report (or "Addendum EIR") was prepared to address a full range of environmental issues associated with the currently-proposed project. These environmental issues include aesthetics, agricultural resources, air quality/greenhouse gas emissions, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, hazards and hazardous materials, water, noise, public services/utilities, and transportation/circulation. The issues of land use and planning, population and housing and recreation were determined to be not relevant to the current proposal. The potential impacts of the proposed project within each environmental issue were identified and discussed. Impacts in all of the environmental issue areas with three exception were determined to be insignificant (Class III Impact). The issues of aesthetics, noise and public services/utilities were identified as potentially significant. In all three instances, implementation of proposed mitigation measures would reduce each potential impact to a less than significant level or be avoided entirely (Class II Impact). These three impacts and their respective mitigation measures are summarized below.

Aesthetics

Impact - The visual character of the currently proposed vertical expansion area would change marginally as a result of the currently proposed project. The approximately four acre area is currently composed of a roughly level, manufactured terrace, with a manufactured 2:1 fill slope below it on the north and west sides, and a 2:1 cut slope face behind and above it on the east. The ridge behind it extends to an elevation of approximately 1,400 feet. The vertical expansion area does not currently have any significant native vegetation and is used as a staging area for sorting green waste. Under existing approvals, fill would be placed to elevate the existing bench to 1,360 feet; under the requested vertical expansion, fill would be placed to elevate the bench to 1,386 feet. The 2:1 fill slope face along the north and west margins of the vertical expansion area would be carried up to the ultimate elevation of 1,386 feet. The ridge behind the area would remain higher than the fill surface. There are no unique visual features within the currently proposed expansion area that would be impacted by project activities. The fill slope would be distinguishable from adjacent natural areas due to the lighter color of the fill soil until revegetation occurs. Revegetation will serve to visually blend the currently proposed expansion area with the surrounding landscape. The following mitigation measure would reduce this impact to a less than significant level.

Mitigation Measure - The applicant shall prepare a complete engineered grading plan and revegetation plan to State standards for the currently proposed vertical expansion area for review and enforcement by the LEA/EA and the Lead Agency. The grading plan must illustrate how the proposed fill will be contoured to blend in with existing adjacent topographical forms and features. The revegetation plan shall also be prepared using species that are consistent with adjacent grassland and scrub habitat types. The plan must be consistent with related Title 27 erosion control standards and is subject to review and approval by the County Planning and Building Department.

Noise

Impact - The currently proposed project results in potentially significant noise impacts due to the stockpiling of solid waste to an elevation of 1,386 feet. This potentially significant impact is similar to but does not exceed the potential noise impacts associated with the previously approved project. Implementation of the following mitigation measure would reduce this potential impact to a less than significant level.

Mitigation Measure - To reduce potential noise impacts on off-site residences, the applicant shall implement one of the two following mitigation options:

(a) Limit the hours of operation for material recycling grinding equipment to the hours of 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. and provide all residents living within 500 feet of all road segments that are located within a ¼ mile radius of the landfill boundary with a contact number for the landfill manager for which complaints can be reported regarding noise. In the event that corrective action is inadequate, a second contact number shall also be provided for the environmental monitor for which unresolved noise complaints can be reported; or

(b) Place fill in the low points of surrounding ridges. The environmental monitor shall monitor compliance quarterly.

Public Services/Utilities

Impact - The currently proposed project results in potentially significant solid waste impacts due to the litter nuisance along roadways adjacent to the landfill. This potentially significant impact is similar to but does not exceed the potential solid waste impacts associated with the previously approved project. Implementation of the following mitigation measure would reduce this potential impact to a less than significant level.

Mitigation Measure - The applicant shall prepare a litter control plan for review and approval by the County Public Works Department and the County Public Health Department which reduces littering of local roadways resulting from transport of uncovered loads to the landfill and litter blowing off the landfill site. The environmental monitor shall review the litter control program and upon initial commencement of the project, conduct quarterly site visits to verify that it has been implemented. The plan shall include, but not be limited to the following components:

(a) Issue a written “one-time” warning and provide education material to the driver of any vehicle with an uncovered load;

(b) Post signage at the landfill entrance and/or scale house stating this policy;

(c) Provide weekly removal of trash and litter on the sections of Homestead Road, South El Pomar Road, El Pomar Road and Templeton Road located within one mile of the landfill entrance; and

(d) Provide all residents living within 500 feet of all road segments that are located within a 1/4 mile radius of the landfill boundary with a contact number for the on-site landfill manager for which complaints can be reported regarding trash on these roadways. In the event that corrective action is inadequate, a second contact number shall also be provided for the environmental monitor for which unresolved litter complaints can be reported.

Implementation of the plan shall be monitored though the contact agency noted in item "d" of this mitigation with corrective action to be taken by that agency for violations of this mitigation measure.

The plan must be reviewed and approved by the County Public Works Department and the County Public Health Department prior to exceeding the currently permitted solid waste elevation of 1,360 feet in module 3 and a portion of module 4 or prior to placement of a soil liner within areas outside the original landfill boundary established in 1970.

All residual impacts associated with the current project proposal are identified as either Class II impacts (potentially significant impacts which have been reduced to a level of insignificance or avoided entirely with the implementation of proposed mitigation measures) or Class III impacts (impacts which are found to be insignificant).

Comments on Addendum EIR

The Addendum EIR was circulated for public review and comment on September 14, 2016. The Department received two responses, one from the applicant and one from CalRecycle. These comments are summarized below along with staff's responses:

- Mike Hoover, On-site Landfill Manager (September 30, 2016) - Comments included additional information concerning a recently approved (February, 2016) amendment to the Williamson Act Contract, annual vehicle trip totals and several of the proposed mitigation measures. All applicable revisions have been reflected in this staff report as well as the Addendum EIR.
- CalRecycle (September 28, 2016) – Made corrections to specific acreage totals and other details associated with the proposed vertical expansion. All applicable revisions to the project description have been reflected in this Staff Report as well as the Addendum EIR.

ORDINANCE COMPLIANCE/LAND USE CONSISTENCY

Existing Land Uses

The proposed project involves a request by Chicago Grade Landfill and Recycling, LLC for a modification of an existing Conditional Use Permit in order gain additional, short-term capacity in a portion of the Chicago Grade Landfill. This additional capacity will be created with the following proposed actions: (1) increase the currently approved 1,360

foot elevation limit to a 1,386 foot elevation over approximately four acres within module 3 and a portion of module 4 of the land fill and (2) allow site preparation (i.e., placement of liner) within areas outside the approved 1970 landfill boundary but not into the modules 6 or 7 that were established in 2007 with the County's approval of a Conditional Use Permit (DRC2003-00026). These actions would expand the solid waste footprint by approximately 0.67 acres and would create approximately 166,500 cubic yards of additional waste storage space or eight additional months of storage operations at the landfill. After completion of landfill operations associated with the proposed vertical expansion to elevation 1,386, the four acre area within module 3 and a portion of module 4 will be covered with low permeability clay soils and revegetated. The proposed project is within the Agriculture land use category and is located at 2290 Homestead Road in the Atascadero-Templeton area approximately two miles west of the City of Atascadero. No lands within the proposed expansion area are designated Farmland of Statewide Importance.

Ordinance Compliance

The previously approved Conditional Use Permit (DRC2003-00026) evaluated the following local and regional plans in order to determine the proposed project's compliance: San Luis Obispo County General Plan and Land Use Ordinance; CalRecycle policies; Regional Water Quality Control Board policies; the Clean Air Plan; the Regional Transportation Plan and the North County Area Plan-El Pomar-Estrella Sub-area. The previously approved (2007) landfill expansion and the currently proposed vertical expansion conform with these local and regional plans.

It should be noted that the current proposal represents a very small part, approximately four acres of the currently permitted 76.4 acre landfill area. While amending the prior approval, the proposed project is consistent and complies with these ordinances and standards.

COMMUNITY ADVISORY GROUP COMMENTS

The Templeton Area Advisory Group (TAAG) reviewed the proposed project at their October 20, 2016 meeting and recommended approval.

AGENCY REVIEW

The following agencies provided comments on the proposed project:

- The County Department of Public Works (Glen Marshall; October 5, 2016) – The project is located in the Paso Robles Groundwater Basin and must follow the adopted water conservation requirements of the Paso Robles Groundwater Basin Plan. The proposed project is located outside the MS-4 boundary and does not meet the criteria for Storm Water Management. Two recommended conditions of approval were also provided.
- San Luis Obispo County Air Pollution Control District (Melissa Guise; October 11, 2016) – no comments regarding the proposed vertical expansion.
- CalRecycle – See comments above on Addendum EIR.

Conditions of Approval applied to the current project are listed in Exhibit B of this Staff Report. Conditions of Approval carried forward from the previously approved project are listed in Exhibit C of this Staff Report.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Planning Commission take the following actions in this order:

1. Approve the Addendum to the previously certified EIR including any attachments as complete and adequate in accordance with the applicable provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act, Public Resources Code Section 21000 et.seq.

2. Approve the amended Conditional Use Permit (DRC2003-00026) based on the Findings in Exhibit A and Conditions of Approval in Exhibit B.

ATTACHMENTS/EXHIBITS

Attachment 1: Exhibit A – Findings
Attachment 2: Exhibit B – Conditions of Approval
Attachment 3: Exhibit C – February 7, 2007 Findings and Conditions
Attachment 4: Exhibit D – Project Graphics
Attachment 5: Exhibit E – Agency Referral Responses
Attachment 6: Exhibit F – Addendum EIR
Attachment 7: Exhibit G – Comments on Addendum EIR